

21st Century Community Learning Centers Frequently Asked Questions

Table of Contents

<u>Question Categories</u>	<u>Page</u>
Eligibility Entities	1
Free and Reduced Lunch Data	5
Multiple Sites on Application	6
Charter Schools	8
Private Schools	8
Direct Grants.....	9
Program Requirements	10
Grant Funding	14
Fiscal.....	18
Supplement versus Supplant.....	20
Evaluation and Audit	21
General RFA.....	22
Needs Assessment.....	23
Charging of Fees	24
Child Care Licensing	24
Sustainability Plan	25
Miscellaneous	25

The following is a list of frequently asked questions and answers that represent the majority of inquiries submitted to the California Department of Education (CDE) during the last two Request for Application phases conducted for the state-administered 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) Program. They are posted on this Web site to assist in the development of program applications for submission and consideration by CDE for federal grant awards.

Eligible Entities

1. **Question:** The absolute priority on page 4 of the RFA mentions “students who primarily attend.” What does “primarily attend” mean?

Answer: Schools that students “primarily attend,” for purposes of defining absolute priority, means that a majority of schools within the grant application are schools:

- a) That are eligible for Title 1 schoolwide programs (applies to applications proposing to serve public school students); and/or
- b) That serve a high percentage of students from low-income families (applies to applications proposing to serve private school students). See pages 4 and 5 of the RFA.

2. **Question:** For existing 21st CCLC Program or After School Education and Safety (ASES) Program grantees, is the 25 percent expansion based on original goals or goals actually achieved?

Answer: The 25 percent expansion is based on the maximum grant amount.

3. **Question:** Are community-based organizations (CBOs) eligible to apply directly for funds for programs provided to existing 21st CCLC Program sites if the CBO is currently providing these programs free as an in-kind match?

Answer: CBOs may apply directly for the 21st CCLC Program; however, receiving funds through this grant for services currently provided to a program, even free as an in-kind match, would be considered supplanting existing use of funds.

4. **Question:** For current federal grantees whose grants end on May 30, 2004, can the application include additional eligible schools not in the current program?

Answer: Yes. Current federal grantees whose grants end on May 30, 2004, are considered “new” applicants for state grantee purposes. This means the application may be configured to meet the general provisions stated in the RFA.

5. **Question:** Can 21st CCLC Program funds be used for a summer school program?

Answer: Only if the applicant has applied for, and has been awarded, core funding. Core base funding under the 21st CCLC Program is required in order to receive core supplemental funding under this federal program, and this supplemental funding may be used for a summer school program.

6. **Question:** Please elaborate/clarify the application process for past federally administered 21st CCLC Program awardees (grant period ending May 31, 2004). Would they have to address any additional or a different set of questions?

Answer: No. Prior 21st CCLC Program grantees, whose federally administered funding cycle has finished, will not be required to address additional or different questions. They are expected to complete the California 21st CCLC Program application in its entirety and compete with all other applicants.

7. **Question:** If a program was receiving both ASES Program and federal 21st CCLC Program funds but is no longer receiving federal 21st CCLC Program funds, can the program apply for 21st CCLC funds and use it for schools receiving ASES Program funds?

Answer: Yes. However, 21st CCLC Program funds may not be used to supplant federal, state, local, or nonfederal funds. You may use California 21st CCLC Program funds:

- a) To expand to additional schools not previously funded; or
- b) To add students to a currently funded ASES Program site. In this case you must propose to provide services to more than 25 percent additional students.

Note that ASES Program grantees that remain provisionally recertified in year two of their current grant award are ineligible to apply.

8. **Question:** Is this application cycle appropriate for currently funded, federally administered 21st CCLC programs whose funding ends in May 2004? If so, can they apply for this round of funding for the same schools? And is Year One of the grant considered to be just the month of June 2004?

Answer: Yes, it is appropriate for currently funded, federally administered 21st CCLC programs whose funding ends in May 2004 to respond to this RFA, and the same schools may be included in the state-administered RFA. Year One of the grant is considered to be May 5 to June 30, 2004. However, because 21st CCLC Program funds may not be used to supplant existing funds, a federally administered 21st CCLC program whose funding ends in May 2004 may use California 21st CCLC Program funding for existing programs only after the termination date of the former grant.

9. **Question:** If we have an existing after-school grant through the ASES Program, may we apply only for supplemental funding for intersession expansion at existing schools; that is, to expand to additional school days in those schools?

Answer: No. Base funding under the 21st CCLC Program is required in order to receive supplemental funding under this federal program. If you have an existing after-school grant through the ASES Program, your options are to expand to additional schools that have not been previously funded and/or to add more than 25 percent additional students to currently funded ASES Program sites.

- 10. Question:** We are a community college and are presently partnering with two elementary schools in a 21st CCLC Program grant by providing Americorps members to serve as tutors in their after-school programs (as part of a match). Are we eligible to apply for funding on our own?

Answer: A community college may apply for funding as the applicant agency or may apply to receive competitive priority in collaboration with a Local Educational Agency (LEA). Please note, however, that all 21st CCLC Program applications require the efforts of a collaborative group partnering organization. If the LEA already serves as the fiscal agent of an existing 21st CCLC Program to serve students of a particular school, then the community college would not be able to be the fiscal agent for a new or expanded 21st CCLC Program to serve students in that school.

- 11. Question:** To meet the competitive priority, assuming both eligible entities are involved, may either the CBO or the LEA/schools be the applicant?

Answer: Either the CBO or the LEA may be the applicant. See page 3 of the RFA under "Who May Apply." Also refer to the definition of "competitive priority" in the Glossary on page 67 and to pages 21-22, "Attachments and Memoranda of Understanding," for information about LEA and collaborative partner contributions, roles, and responsibilities in order to meet competitive priority requirements.

- 12. Question:** If a federally administered program's grant period ends May 2004, but the program is applying for a one-year no-cost extension, is it eligible to apply this year (for the same schools)?

Answer: Yes. However, California's 21st CCLC Program grant funds may be used only to supplement existing funding; they may not be used to supplant existing funding. In this case, with the same schools, one could apply to increase the number of enrollees by 25 percent.

- 13. Question:** If current 21st CCLC programs don't meet the absolute eligibility requirements, are they not eligible to apply at all?

Answer: As stipulated in the RFA under "Application Review and Grant Award Process," applications will be initially screened to ensure that the applicant agency is an eligible entity and that the student population to be served satisfies the absolute funding priority, as described in Section II.B, "Prioritized Eligibility for Funding." If an application does not satisfy these and other criteria during the initial screening process at CDE, the application will not be forwarded to the Readers' Conference for scoring.

- 14. Question:** We will be opening a new school in September 2004. All students will be drawn from two Title I schools, each having at least 70 percent free or reduced lunch participation. Can this new school be included in the application?

Answer: Yes. This new school can be included in the application. Please explain the situation clearly in the application narrative and use the free and reduced-lunch rates found on DataQuest that pertain to the two schools from which students will be drawn. These rates will be verified using DataQuest.

- 15. Question:** Is it possible for a CBO, faith-based organization (FBO) or other non-LEA entity to apply alone without a partner LEA?

Answer: Both a CBO and a FBO are permitted to apply without partnering with an LEA. However, CDE strongly recommends that all applicants apply in partnership with an LEA. An applicant may only be eligible for the competitive priority if the application is submitted jointly by at least one LEA receiving funds under Title I, Part A, and at least one CBO or other public or private entity (in addition to the other requirement for competitive priority). When making this decision, it is also important to consider the positive contributions that an LEA partner might add to an application.

- 16. Question:** How do consortium agencies apply? Where is this discussed?

Answer: Communities or organizations may apply together to share resources. However, CDE must establish a grant relationship with one entity that will be legally responsible for grant funds and reporting, etc. The consortium members may either form such an agency or identify one of their member agencies to be the legally responsible agency named as the applicant agency/fiscal agent on Form A1 of the application. Regardless of which option is selected, the consortium and its participating members must complete all of the forms and meet the requirements identified in the RFA. A consortium of eligible entities is listed among those eligible to apply on page 3 of the RFA.

- 17. Question:** If we currently receive ASES Program funds, may we only apply to serve 25 percent additional students at that site?

Answer: Refer to page 3 of the RFA. Currently funded ASES Program grantees may apply for 21st CCLC Program funding to establish programs in new schools and/or to increase the number of students served in a current ASES Program or 21st CCLC Program by 25 percent.

- 18. Question:** Page 5 of the RFA refers to the following CDE Web page for assistance in identifying Section 1116 or Program Improvement schools:
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ias/titleone/pi/query/asp>. Is there another CDE Web page that can provide more current information?

Answer: Yes. Since the RFA was published, another CDE Web page has been updated and now provides more current information regarding Section 1116 or Program Improvement schools. This alternate Web page is found at http://www.cde.ca.gov/ayp/titleone/TI/DataReport_03a.asp. Any school for which there is a year entered in the "PI Year of Placement 2003-04" column is most likely a current Section 1116 (Program Improvement) school. Please note, however, that there are still some adjustments being made to the data on this Web site as well. As a result, it is still necessary to confirm the Section 1116 status with the school or district, regardless of which site you use.

19. **Question:** How are schools identified under Section 1116? For example, my school was identified as a Program Improvement (PI) school in 2002-03, and we are currently on the list. However, we made AYP this year and are no longer in PI status for 2003-04. Do we meet competitive status?

Answer: No. Section 1116 refers to those programs that have not met Title I goals for two consecutive years. A listing of Section 1116 schools, known as Program Improvement schools, can be found at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/iasa/titleone/pi/query.asp> by checking all seven boxes under "Program Improvement ID Year" and keying in "900" as the maximum records to display. This list is updated periodically as schools appeal their Adequate Yearly Progress status, and it is necessary to confirm the Section 1116 status with the school or district.

Free and Reduced Lunch Data

1. **Question:** If a school for which an application is being developed (in this case a middle school) has not yet opened, should we use data from the school's projected feeder school? (Relative to Title I, etc.)

Answer: Provided that the school will be operational by May 5, 2004, data from the feeder schools would be appropriate to use as it is the only data available.

2. **Question:** Please restate the Competitive Priority Criteria.

Answer: Competitive priority is given to those applicants that (a) satisfy the absolute funding priority; (b) are proposing to serve students attending schools that are designated "in need of improvement" under Title I, Section 1116; and (c) are jointly submitted by at least one LEA receiving funds under Title I, Part A, and at least one CBO or other public or private entity. Please refer to page 5 of the Elementary/Middle School RFA.

3. **Question:** We have a school in our district that is anticipated to be eligible for 40 percent free and reduced-cost meals in a short time; they are very close, and the administration is working on recruitment. You said during your presentation that you would use only the data currently on DataQuest to make the determination of eligibility on this absolute priority. Since this approach is different from what has been done for Healthy Start applicants in the past, could you verify?

Answer: CDE will, indeed, use only the data posted on DataQuest to confirm the free and reduced-cost meals rate of public schools.

4. **Question:** Is there an alternate way to access the list of schools that meet the free or reduced-cost meals criteria? We were unable to access the list at the DataQuest address provided on page 8 of the RFA.

Answer: The link provided in the RFA (<http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest>) will take you to the DataQuest Web site. You may also find the following link useful: <http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/page2.asp?subject=Enrollment&level=School&submit1=Submit>.

5. **Question:** Do we use last year's CBEDS date for school attendance or DataQuest?

Answer: Use <http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest> to link to CBEDS data at CDE's Web site.

6. **Question:** Will a school that does not have Title I designation but has at least 40 percent free and reduced-cost meals data receive priority status for funding?

Answer: Competitive priority is given only to those applicants that (a) satisfy the absolute funding priority; (b) are proposing to serve students attending schools that are designated "in need of improvement" under Title I, Section 1116; and (c) are jointly submitted by at least one LEA receiving funds under Title I, Part A, and at least one CBO or other public or private entity.

7. **Question:** This question pertains to the eligibility criteria. According to the guidelines, "CDE must restrict grant awards that propose to primarily serve students who are eligible as Title I schoolwide programs." As a county office of education (COE), we are ineligible to participate in the schoolwide program under Title I, which is under Part A of Title I. We receive Title I funds under Part B, which is the Neglected and Delinquent Program; however, we meet the free/reduced meal criteria. May we apply?

Answer: Yes. Local educational agencies, such as COEs and other eligible entities, are allowed to apply for 21st CCLC Program funding if they have schools or programs with more than 40 percent of students eligible to receive funding under Title I, as measured by a free and reduced-cost meals rate.

8. **Question:** Does a school with 99 percent of its students receiving free and reduced-cost meals get preference (in the scoring process) over a school with a 41 percent count?

Answer: No.

9. **Question:** Regarding the criterion that 40 percent of the student population be eligible for free or reduced lunch: Can this percentage be determined by using applications for free and reduced-cost meals from September 2002?

Answer: No. Please use <http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest> to determine your school's current free and reduced-cost meals data.

Multiple Sites on Application

1. **Question:** Referring to the question regarding a CBO servicing several schools: What if one of the schools is a part of a 21st CCLC Program but students from that school attend our program?

Answer: A school or students from a school may be included only on one application for the California 21st CCLC Program funding.

2. **Question:** Can there be several CBOs providing different types of programs on one application with an LEA, or should the CBOs apply separately?

Answer: If several CBOs are providing different services to a group of students under one comprehensive program, then only one application is required for the program.

3. **Question:** We are a for-profit educational organization. We want to run programs at multiple schools in different LEAs. Do we need a separate application for each LEA?

Answer: An organization may propose to serve several schools, in collaboration with several LEAs, under one comprehensive program on one application.

4. **Question:** As the LEA, can we be a lead applicant on one application and a partner on another application with a CBO as the lead applicant?

Answer: Yes, provided that different schools are included in each application.

5. **Question:** May one agency submit multiple grants? Would each require a separate CDS code?

Answer: Yes. The CDS code is also known as the “school code.” A school may be included only on one application for funding.

6. **Question:** May we submit one proposal for middle school and high school?

Answer: No. Applicants proposing to serve middle school students must respond to the Elementary Middle School program RFA, and applicants proposing to serve high school students must respond to the High School program RFA when it is released.

7. **Question:** We are applying as a large school district with multiple sites and multiple community partners. Is there any disadvantage to this approach?

Answer: The readers will be scoring the application based upon the strength of the plan, not the number of schools involved. What must be kept in mind is that larger applications may require more stringent fiscal management to ensure the success of all schools involved in the program. Additionally, keep in mind that the scoring rubric used for programs requesting less than \$2 million in core grant funding is different from the rubric for those requesting more than \$2 million in core grant funding.

8. **Question:** If a district has 11 schools (4 middle, 7 elementary), should the district apply for two separate grants or one grant (for all 11 schools)?

Answer: An applicant may choose to configure the grant proposal as necessary.

9. **Question:** We are a CBO and have no site of our own. May we serve multiple schools with our program, or must we apply jointly with each school? If so, wouldn't we be applying for multiple grants?

Answer: A CBO may apply to run a program at more than one school site in a single application. However, each school must clearly be a collaborative partner in the application.

10. **Question:** Our high schools are grades nine through twelve. Which RFA should we use to include ninth grade?

Answer: If the ninth grade is high school in your district, you should apply using the High School RFA when it is released. If the ninth grade is junior high/middle school in your district, you should apply using the Elementary and Junior High/Middle School RFA.

Charter Schools

1. **Question:** May a direct-funded charter school apply as an LEA?

Answer: Yes.

Private Schools

1. **Question:** Are parochial schools eligible to apply as school sites to serve their student population if they meet the Title I requirements?

Answer: Yes.

2. **Question:** How do private school students access services related to the California 21st CCLC Program?

Answer: Private schools may apply for 21st CCLC Program funding as an applicant or may choose to be part of a district application for the 21st CCLC Program. Title IX, Section 9501, of NCLB requires that participating public school districts must contact the private schools within their district and consult with the private schools to determine if the private schools want to be part of the district application. Timely and meaningful consultation must include discussions identifying the needs of private school students, the services to be provided, where the services will be provided, and how the services will be assessed.

3. **Question:** May a private school apply to implement an after-school program at its school site for students who live in the neighborhood but who do not attend the private school?

Answer: A private school may propose to serve students from other schools at its site. Proposing to serve students in the neighborhood would incorporate the concept of "community learning center." It is recommended that the schools where those students attend be included as partners on the application. All other eligibility requirements must be met.

Direct Grants

1. **Question:** If we are not including a family literacy component, do we need to explain why?

Answer: Federal statute mandates that all applicants must assess the need for family literacy services as part of their proposal.

2. **Question:** Does the \$50,000 lower limit apply to adjunct literacy and access funding?

Answer: A proposal must be for no less than \$50,000, including core and direct grant funding.

3. **Question:** If an existing site applies for two direct grants--access and family literacy--the maximum would be \$45,000. Would this be fundable, or must the minimum grant amount equal \$50,000 for direct grants?

Answer: A proposal must be for no less than \$50,000, including core and direct grant funding. Please note that an applicant will not receive a direct grant unless the applicant is awarded a core grant.

4. **Question:** May an applicant apply for a direct grant for access for more than one school site?

Answer: Direct grants may be requested for program sites only. If an application includes multiple program sites (sites where the students will be served), direct grants may be requested for each site. Please note that an applicant will not receive a direct grant unless the applicant is awarded a core grant.

5. **Question:** If we already have ASES Program money, may we apply for a direct grant only?

Answer: No. Direct grants may only be applied for in conjunction with a core grant request. In the case of an existing 21st CCLC Program or ASES Program grantee, core funds to serve at least 25 percent more students must be requested before direct grant funds may be requested.

6. **Question:** Do optional grants also receive five-year funding?

Answer: Yes.

7. **Question:** Regarding direct grants for family literacy services: Is the \$20,000 per program site or per grant proposal?

Answer: Direct grants may be requested for each program site. If an application requests funds for multiple program sites (sites where the students will be served), direct grants may be requested for up to \$20,000 for each site. Remember that funds for direct grants must be supplementary to existing services, must be clearly justified, and may only be expended for the purposes for which they were intended.

8. **Question:** If ten schools are applying in one application and only two need the family literacy direct grant, may we apply for those two schools alone?

Answer: Yes, you may, provided that each of the schools is proposing to serve students as a program site.

9. **Question:** Since safe transportation is a requirement, is funding appropriately used either for access for school vehicles or for purchase of a van or other vehicle?

Answer: Yes, the funds may be so used provided that the request meets an identified need, as described in the optional direct grant narrative for access.

Program Requirements

1. **Question:** If a school district has an approved release time from school, may this release time be applied to the three-hour-per-day grant requirement?

Answer: After-school programs funded under the 21st CCLC Program must operate for at least three hours per day, commencing at the end of the school day.

2. **Question:** We are planning to offer English-as-a-Second-Language classes to parents in the evenings after our after-school program (Cool School). The after-school program runs from 2:20 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., and the parent classes will be offered from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. While parents are in classes, students will be working with Cool School staff on homework and academic enrichment activities. May we apply for funding for this after-school component for students offered from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.?

Answer: No. After-school programs funded under the 21st CCLC Program must operate for at least three hours per day, commencing at the end of the school day.

3. **Question:** Must we require students to attend our programs five days a week? May we offer the program five days a week and require attendance only four days a week?

Answer: The Elementary/ Middle School RFA states that the local collaborative must determine a policy regarding the students' attendance in the program. Regardless of the local collaborative's attendance policies, a program must operate and remain open five days per week for at least three hours a day, beginning when school dismisses.

4. **Question:** If a school does not provide transportation but students walk to and from school, including to a centrally located center, does this situation meet the "safe access" requirement?

Answer: Policies regarding the safe transportation of students to and from the program should be addressed and determined by the local collaborative. If the local collaborative decides that the requirement for safe access must be met, a description of the provision for safe transportation must be discussed in the application.

5. **Question:** Regarding the requirements for before-school programs: Do students have to attend for the full 90 minutes to be counted as attendees?

Answer: The Elementary/ Middle School RFA states that the local collaborative must determine a policy regarding the students' attendance patterns in the program. Based on experience and research, the California Department of Education recommends that programs require elementary attendance every day and middle school attendance at least three days per week of the five-day program.

6. **Question:** May we hire high school students as tutors or use them as volunteers?

Answer: Yes. Applicants are advised to follow local policy about the use of volunteers. In addition, effective practice suggests that tutors receive training to become knowledgeable and able to assist in the instruction of reading, writing, and math. Remember, volunteers who are supervising students, as a part of the 1:20 ratio, must meet the minimum qualifications required of staff.

7. **Question:** Will the attendance pattern recommendations by the state be given priority over other patterns of attendance?

Answer: No. Page 10 of the Elementary/ Middle School RFA states that the local collaborative must determine a policy regarding the students' attendance in the program.

8. **Question:** Is the three-hour a day program limit negotiable?

Answer: No.

9. **Question:** May a program be run Monday through Thursday at school and Friday and Saturday at the CBO community site?

Answer: Yes. If the local collaborative agrees, a program may be operated at a combination of sites if all requirements of an off-site program are met.

10. **Question:** We are a rural district and we had problems when we ended our programs at 6 p.m. Some kids got home as late as 7:30 p.m. May we include transportation time in the 3 to 6 p.m. time frame?

Answer: You may include transportation time in the 3 to 6 p.m. time frame provided that after-school programming and/or activities continue during that time. However, the program site must still be open and available until 6 p.m. for students who may be picked up by parents or guardians as late as 6 p.m.

11. **Question:** If the program is based on the school site but uses an alternate, off-site location for special activities, do the requirements on page 9 apply for that enrichment site?

Answer: Yes.

- 12. Question:** Do educational enrichment activities differ from the academic assistance component?

Answer: Please refer to page 11 of the RFA for examples of academic assistance and educational enrichment components. The box on page 5 shows examples of past successful practices and creativity in the after-school programs.

- 13. Question:** Is there a difference between a tutor and a paraprofessional in terms of staffing requirements?

Answer: Please refer to page 11 of the RFA. Federal legislation does not require tutors or teachers who provide academic enrichment or tutorial services under the 21st CCLC Program to have specific qualifications. However, specific paraprofessional qualifications do apply to LEA employees with instructional duties in 21st CCLC Programs that (1) share funding with Title I-funded programs; and/or (2) are part of the Title I schoolwide program. The paraprofessional requirements for staff hired by an LEA do not apply if the after-school program (1) is not funded with Title I funds; and/or (2) is not part of the Title I schoolwide program. Employees who are contracted or employed by agencies other than an LEA that provide 21st CCLC Program services are not required to meet paraprofessional qualifications.

- 14. Question:** May the hours of operation for a single program be split between two locations; for example, 2:30 to 5:00 at a school site and 5:00 to 7:00 at a CBO community center?

Answer: Yes, provided all requirements of an off-school site program are met.

- 15. Question:** Do middle schools need to be open five days per week even if students are required to attend regularly three days per week, or may we open just three or four days per week?

Answer: All programs must remain open and operate five days per week.

- 16. Question:** Must the program be located at a school site or may it be at a community, non-school site?

Answer: Please refer to page 9 of the RFA. A program may operate either at a school site or an off-site location, provided there is agreement and that safe transportation is provided to and from the site. The location must be at least as available and as accessible as a school site, and there must be a clearly defined plan of communication.

- 17. Question:** Does the 20 to 1 student-to-staff ratio include the director and site coordinator positions?

Answer: Please refer to page 11 of the RFA. To be considered part of the student-to-staff ratio, the director and site coordinator must be in positions that directly supervise students.

18. Question: How is attendance counted if students leave early or arrive late?

Answer: Funding for core grant awards is based on student attendance in the full program. Before-school programs must operate at least 90 minutes, and after-school programs must operate three hours per day, five days per week. Each program's local collaborative partners determine attendance patterns needed in order to meet both locally defined goals and requirements of the program.

19. Question: Must a program deal with all three program components or focus on one?

Answer: The application narrative must include each of the three components: (1) academic assistance; (2) enrichment; and (3) family literacy services. The academic assistance and enrichment components are required to be included in a request for a core grant award. In addition, an assessment of the need for family literacy services must be made. If a need for family literacy services is identified, an applicant may apply for an optional direct grant for family literacy.

20. Question: Can you point to an example of what an arts program would look like to be in accordance with the new 21st CCLC Program?

Answer: An arts program that provides educational enrichment to help students meet state and local visual and performing arts standards would comply with the regulations of the 21st CCLC Program.

21. Question: The RFA states "strategies based on scientific research when providing services in core academic areas such as reading and math." What does that mean?

Answer: Please refer to page 70 of the RFA for a discussion of this term.

22. Question: How do you apply for a school that serves grades four through eight?

Answer: A particular school's funding level is dependent upon that school's designation (via CDS code) and enrollment. If a school serving grades four through eight is designated as a middle school (via CDS code), then the legislative grant caps of a middle school would apply.

23. Question: May an off-site program that is busing in students from various schools operate until 7:30 p.m.?

Answer: An after-school program must operate for at least three hours per day. Programs are welcome to operate for more than three hours, though no additional funding is granted for this.

24. Question: When you talk about enrichment that supports academics, are you talking about research that says, "kids in arts do better academically," or are you looking for arts activities that are tied to specific subjects (e.g., math or social studies)?

Answer: Each of these ideas is valid and should be considered when planning your program.

- 25. Question:** Am I right that, in the end, there is no requirement — not even a strong recommendation — that sites have a site coordinator?

Answer: Several areas of the RFA require a description of plans for establishing and managing the before- and after-school program. Specifically on page 26, "Program Administration," the applicant is asked to identify relevant experience or promise of success in providing educational and related activities. This includes both grant management and programmatic experience. The role of a site coordinator is appropriate to include in this discussion. The Program Administration component of the scoring rubric requires "ongoing, high quality, relevant staff." These sections demonstrate that effective practice includes a site coordinator as essential in managing after-school programs.

Grant Funding

- 1. Question:** How does the grant award amount that a grantee receives compare to the amount that is actually paid to a grantee?

Answer: When an application receives funding, a grant award document is generated. The amount of the award is determined through the process described on page 18 of the RFA. Payments for core grant funding, however, are based on the actual student attendance in the program as explained on pages 6 and 7 of the RFA. These two amounts may differ due to lower-than-anticipated attendance. Grantees with 21st CCLC Program funding that was federally administered should note that this state-administered process is different.

- 2. Question:** May supplemental time on nonschool days run over three hours and still count as creditable time?

Answer: Programs may operate longer than the required time; however, no additional core grant funding will be provided for the additional hours of operation.

- 3. Question:** What is the timing of invoicing and payments for quarterly payments? For example, is the January-March quarter invoiced in January or after the end of the quarter?

Answer: Attendance reports are due quarterly. The first quarterly attendance report is due on October 31 with the first payment sent in December; the second attendance report is due on January 31 with the second payment sent in March; the third attendance report is due on April 30 with the third payment sent in June; and the fourth quarter attendance report is due on July 31 with the fourth payment sent in September.

- 4. Question:** Is the \$5 per participant per day provided on the same reimbursement basis as the ASES Program?

Answer: Yes. Core funding will be processed and distributed under the same process as the ASES Program. Attendance reports will be required each quarter with payment for attendance based on that report.

5. **Question:** Can you provide clarification regarding the \$50,000 minimum per location, per year versus the amounts per day, per student noted on page 9 for both before- and after-school programs?

Answer: A 21st CCLC Program grant request must be made for a minimum of \$50,000 per year, including core and direct grant funding. Core funding is based upon \$5 per day for students participating in an after-school program, if applicable, and up to \$3.33 per day for a before-school program.

6. **Question:** May an elementary school serve middle school students as well and receive funding for all students served?

Answer: Yes, one site may serve multiple schools. The site and the schools your program will be serving should be indicated on Form A.2. Your narrative should reflect age- and grade-appropriate activities (see page 29 of the rubric scoring process.)

7. **Question:** Please explain the core funding amount for the first year as described on page 10. How can the first year of funding be based on achieving 70 percent of proposed attendance since the program will not have started? Does this mean that all funds will be paid after the first year is completed?

Answer: No. Even though the first year is May 2004 – June 2004, the period May 2004 - June 2005 will be considered the first year for purposes of reaching the 70 percent attendance goal; July 2005 – June 2006 will be considered the second year for purposes of reaching the 85 percent attendance goal; and the remaining fiscal years will use the 100 percent goal. Payments are made once attendance reports are submitted to CDE.

8. **Question:** The RFA has a statement at the top of page 7 that states, "The first year grant award of core funding will be based on achieving at least 70 percent of the proposed student attendance." What is the payment amount if a school achieves only 70 percent of attendance?

Answer: If a grantee achieves 70 percent attendance the first year (May 2004 – June 2005), the grantee will have received 70 percent of the core funding. Additionally, because the grantee achieved the 70 percent attendance goal, 15 percent in administrative costs will be awarded. Note that 15 percent payment of the grant award for start-up is independent of payment for student attendance.

9. **Question:** Is funding for the after-school program based on multiplying \$75 x the total number of pupils enrolled at the elementary school site that exceeds 600 even though those students may not be in the after-school program?

Answer: Yes. A school's large school adjustment is based upon total student enrollment. Remember that this increases the maximum available for a grant award and that payments are based on actual attendance in the program.

- 10. Question:** What is the maximum amount per school specifically as it relates to the \$75,000 amount described earlier?

Answer: A school's maximum allowable request is related to its school enrollment from the California Basic Educational Data Systems (CBEDS). The maximum base core grant funding for elementary schools with an enrollment of less than 600 is \$75,000; for middle schools with an enrollment of less than 900 it is \$100,000. Schools with an enrollment greater than these amounts are allowed an additional large school adjustment in accord with the criteria on page 6 of the RFA. Programs may also request up to 30 percent of the base grant amount to serve students during nonschool days. A maximum may be further increased by requesting funds to serve students in the before-school hours for the regular school year (base) and supplemental funds for before-school programs operating on nonschool days. Please refer to pages 8 through 10 of the Elementary/Middle School program RFA for more details.

- 11. Question:** Since special provisions are available for large schools, why are there no special provisions for small schools, which have the same needs and, according to data, are working just as hard as large schools to serve students?

Answer: The *Education Code*, which provides the funding structure for the 21st CCLC Program, specifically defines a large school adjustment. This adjustment is provided to enable programs to possibly serve more students in a larger student attendance population. These funds are only for core grant funds and are still based upon actual student participation in the program. There are no statutory provisions for small schools. Smaller rural schools might want to form collaborations to reach the economies of scale necessary to support the 21st CCLC Program.

- 12. Question:** Regarding core funding: Will "special needs" children receive any additional funding per day?

Answer: No. Additional resources may be needed to provide equitable access to and participation in programs for some students. However, the program does not provide additional core funding. Resources for this support may be available through your local community partners or through funds available in the direct grant for access.

- 13. Question:** Is the \$50,000 per year a minimum, or is it \$50,000 per year per site for five years that equals \$250,000?

Answer: The minimum amount is \$50,000 per year per grant for five years. The total amount equals \$250,000.

- 14. Question:** If multiple sites are specified in one application, what is the maximum request allowable?

Answer: The legislative maximums of each school on the application combined together determine the maximum allowable request for a given applicant.

15. Question: What is the maximum dollar amount for an elementary school of 1,100 students?

Answer: Multiply the number of students enrolled at the school exceeding 600, in this case 500, by \$75. Add this amount to the \$75,000 maximum for elementary schools to determine the adjusted maximum for the grant award, which would be \$112,500 per year.

16. Question: Are funds reimbursable or paid up front?

Answer: For elementary and middle school grantees, the first payment will include 15 percent of the core grant award to be used for start-up materials and activities. If the grantee has been awarded an optional direct grant, then the first payment will also include 90 percent of the first year's direct grant award. Subsequent payments for core funding will be based on actual student attendance in the program. Thus, applicants will want to be as realistic as possible when projecting student participation. See question number eight in this section for information about receiving payment for administrative costs.

17. Question: Are funds available after five years?

Answer: Funds after the end of the grant period are not guaranteed. Grantees whose funds expire, however, may apply again as new applicants under the program.

18. Question: If a current 21st CCLS Program grantee under the federally administered program whose grant expires on May 31, 2004, applies for continuation money, will it get start-up funding?

Answer: The state 21st CCLC Program is a separate program from the federal program. Grantees of the federally administered 21st CCLC Program whose grant funding terminates on or before May 31, 2004, must apply as new applicants. Grantees will receive 15 percent of the annual grant amount in Year One to be used as start-up. Remember, 21st CCLC Program funds may be used only to fund existing programs and students after the termination date of the former grant.

19. Question: Please clarify whether we can apply for a maximum of \$75,000 per site, plus 30 percent of that amount, or \$22,5000, for supplemental programs (summer), for a total of \$97,500.

Answer: The maximum allowances for after-school programs are \$75,000 for an elementary school (site) and \$100,000 for a middle school site. The supplemental funding available is in addition to this, at a rate of up to a maximum of 30 percent of the base grant amount. However, this funding must be earned through student attendance that justifies that level of funding.

- 20. Question:** If Year One is May 5, 2004 to June 30, 2004, do we get to apply for the full year's funding for this time? Is the 15 percent start-up funding in addition to the full amount? Do we include the 15 percent in the Year One budget? Where and how do we include it?

Answer: You may apply for the full year's funding. For Year One, the full amount, which includes 15 percent administrative costs, may be earned by achieving 70 percent of the projected attendance while the program is open and operating. Year One for this application's attendance earnings will be May 2004 through June 2005. Administrative costs are reflected in column C on Form G1. The 15 percent start-up funding is actually 15 percent of the first year of attendance-based core award funding (page 28 of the RFA) and does not need to be identified separately as start-up costs in your budget but must be reflected in your expenditure report.

- 21. Question:** Under what conditions are grantees eligible for start-up funding? For example, if the application is merely to add students to existing sites, will the grantee get start-up funds?

Answer: Applicants that are adding students to existing sites are not eligible for start-up funding. Applicants proposing to expand the program to new schools are eligible for start-up funding.

Fiscal

- 1. Question:** What, besides indirect cost, is included in "administrative" costs (data collection, project director, evaluation)?

Answer: Administrative costs are those costs that are not directly related to the provision of services to students. For example, the salary of a coordinator who oversees the operation of sites (reporting needs, attendance), but is not involved in the development of student activities may be included as an administrative cost. A coordinator who develops program curriculum and participates directly in the daily activities of students, however, would not be considered an administrative cost. Data collection and evaluation would also be considered administrative costs.

- 2. Question:** What start date do we use for budget calculations?

Answer: Even though the grant period will reflect only two months of the current fiscal year, provide an annual budget using the 12-month period of July 2003 through June 2004. Grant awards are made annually over the five-year period.

3. **Question:** Administrative costs are limited to 15 percent. Does this include school site coordinators' salaries?

Answer: Administrative costs are limited to those expenditures that are not directly related to the provision of services to students. Given the job requirements and duties that your collaborative assigns to specific job titles, a school site coordinator's salary may or may not be considered an administrative cost. Also, part of a school site coordinator's salary may be considered nonadministrative costs if the job requirements and duties are directly related to the provision of services to students. In this case, that part of the coordinator's salary would not be charged as administrative costs.

4. **Question:** May LEAs subcontract with other agencies?

Answer: Yes.

5. **Question:** May funds be used to purchase food for parent programs and for the students in the program (e.g., pizza parties, refreshments, incentives)?

Answer: Yes.

6. **Question:** May the provision of safe transportation be funded from the 21st CCLC Program funding, or should the LEA fund it from other sources?

Answer: Transportation may be funded from the 21st CCLC Program direct grant for access funds.

7. **Question:** Under "Grant Budget Restriction," please explain the "carryover" provision. May we carry over potential funds that we did not earn in a fiscal year or may we carry over only earned funds?

Answer: A grantee may only carry over core, unobligated funds that have been earned through actual student attendance with the provision that each participating program site named in the application is making substantial progress in implementing its 21st CCLC Program and that all fiscal and evaluation reports have been submitted.

8. **Question:** If we don't apply this year, will funds be available next year or do we have to wait five years?

Answer: CDE conducts a new application process each year and awards funding through one-year grants for a five-year period. However, 21st CCLC Program grant funds are contingent upon annual appropriations from the federal budget. If federal funding is decreased significantly, the number of new awardees each year may be smaller than in previous years.

9. **Question:** May portable buildings be purchased or are facilities expenditures intended for rent?

Answer: Portable buildings may be purchased provided that your program's budget does not exceed the limitation on administrative costs related to the provision of services to students.

Supplement versus Supplant

1. **Question:** If a program (of a partner) has lost its funding, can we now fund it without worrying about the supplanting issue?

Answer: Yes. However, if the loss of funding is voluntary to gain access to federal funding under the 21st CCLC Program, this action would be considered "supplanting."

2. **Question:** In regard to supplanting vs. supplementing services, what about programs wishing to supplant currently offered services that are not meeting needs with services that will better meet the needs of students?

Answer: The 21st CCLC Program grant funds must supplement, not supplant, currently existing funds. If a current program is not meeting the needs of the community, 21st CCLC Program funds may be used to supplement that program (additional services, extending services to a greater number of students), but they may not be used to replace any funding for services currently in place, including funding of services that may not be meeting the needs of participating students.

3. **Question:** If a school district has been piloting an after-school program using funds that will terminate prior to 21st CCLC Program fund awards, would the program be considered "supplanting" if it is awarded a 21st CCLC Program grant?

Answer: If a program is not currently receiving federal 21st CCLC Program funds or will not receive them by May 2004, then supplanting would not be an issue.

4. **Question:** We are submitting a proposal that combines six small schools. One of the schools has the state ASES Program grant (four years). May that school forfeit that grant to become part of the 21st CCLC Program collaborative proposal?

Answer: No. That action would be considered supplanting state funding.

5. **Question:** May 21st CCLC Program funds be used to supplement the after-school programs funded by state funds?

Answer: The 21st CCLC Program funds may be used to supplement, but not supplant, the state-funded ASES Program. We define supplementing by adding additional students to schools already serving students or by adding new schools that are not already served by the ASES Program.

6. **Question:** It was stated that 21st CCLC Program funds couldn't be used to support an existing program (supplanting). Can these funds be used to enhance (hire additional teachers, for example) an existing program?

Answer: These funds can be used to enhance an existing program by expanding service to more students and schools with the associated costs that would require additional staff.

Evaluation and Audit

1. **Question:** Regarding evaluation: Is an external evaluator required or may a district redirect a current evaluator's time to this proposal?

Answer: An external evaluator is not required. The local collaborative must determine the evaluation needs of its program and work to ensure that the best evaluation possible is carried out. Redirecting a current evaluator's time to this program is permissible.

2. **Question:** The California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) is completed anonymously; therefore, how would 21st CCLC programs be able to get program-level data from these surveys without having participating kids repeat the survey?

Answer: Details are currently being addressed for the administration of the CHKS. A question will be added to the CHKS to determine whether or not a student participates in a school's before-or after-school program. Data from these students will be collected in a manner that protects their rights to privacy.

3. **Question:** What about the CHKS? Is it to be administered only to program participants or to the entire grade level of the school every year? Will an elementary school that administers the CHKS only to fifth graders be expected to give it to other grade levels?

Answer: The details of the 21st CCLC Program CHKS module are currently being addressed. Grantees will receive detailed instructions and training prior to implementation. In the meantime, 21st CCLC Program grantees are encouraged to become familiar with their schools' regular administration of the CHKS and to establish contact with their school/district CHKS coordinator.

4. **Question:** Is the table of contents in the attachment section included as part of the 10-page limit?

Answer: No.

5. **Question:** Regarding program evaluation, state privacy laws restrict STAR data at the student level. How should evaluators expect to assess the required STAR data?

Answer: The "Additional Assurances" form in the RFA, signed by the LEA's representative, ensures the confidentiality of all data. Standardized test data may be disaggregated to the student level by including the student identification number. No names are submitted to CDE.

6. **Question:** If the fiscal agent is a CBO, will a program-specific audit be required or will the agency audit be acceptable?

Answer: The agency audit will be acceptable if it is completed by a licensed Certified Public Accountant.

7. **Question:** Is there a recommended percentage of grant funding allowable for evaluation?

Answer: A solid, meaningful evaluation is critical for a program's success. Although there is no recommended percentage, all applicants are encouraged to coordinate services to secure the best program evaluation possible (either internal or external) and to adequately fund this process.

8. **Question:** Are the core, access, and family literacy grants read together? Are they scored as one application or three separate applications? If we receive one, will we receive the others?

Answer: Although read at the same time, they are scored and awarded separately. Being awarded core funding does not necessarily mean that a grantee will be awarded direct grant funding. However, direct grant awards are only available to applications receiving core funding.

General RFA

1. **Question:** Is the narrative doubled-spaced?

Answer: The requirement is to use a "12-point font that does not exceed six lines per inch." This allows the narrative to be single- or double-spaced.

2. **Question:** If someone submits a 21st CCLC Program application, might that person be eligible to be a grant reviewer? Will reviewers from southern California be allowed to read northern California applications? Is Web-based review under consideration?

Answer: Parties submitting a grant proposal will be eligible to read and score grant applications. Because of the highly competitive nature of this process, all grant reading and scoring will be completed at a central location over a one-week period. There is a standardized process to ensure that no conflicts of interest occur during the grant reading process.

3. **Question:** Who is going to read the applications?

Answer: CDE will convene a group of readers from the field to read and score grant applications. Readers will consist of school and community representatives, including city and county staff, teachers, administrators, board members, parents, staff of children's service groups, before- and after-school program providers, private and community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, and CDE staff.

4. **Question:** How do I get a copy of the RFA?

Answer: Link to <http://www.cde.ca.gov/afterschool/21/rfa/elmidrfacover.htm> to download the RFA.

5. Question: What is the public notice and board approval process?

Answer: The federal statute requires that applicants make known to the public that an application for funding is being submitted and that local school boards are made aware of and approve the application for funding.

6. Question: Does the Memorandum of Understanding to Be Considered for Competitive Priority need to be signed? If so, by whom?

Answer: No. As part of the 21st CCLC Program Application for Core Funding, which requires an authorized signature, the MOU does not require an additional signature. Signatures on Form B signify approval of the MOU.

7. Question: Will we be able to have access to feedback from last year's applications, not just scores, so that we can improve the writing of this year's application?

Answer: It is CDE policy that application scores are not released. However, if you applied for the California 21st CCLC Program grant last year, your Award Notification Letter should have included readers' comments. These comments are provided by the readers who scored your application for technical assistance purposes. Please note that CDE releases the Award Notification Letter (and readers' comments) only to the grant contact specified on Form A1 and to the superintendent. Contact one or the other to review the readers' comments. Applications that are not awarded funding and the associated readers' comments are destroyed after the appeals process is complete.

Needs Assessment

1. Question: In the last 21st CCLC Program application process, we held focus groups in communities across the city. We found that school, parent, and community concerns were the same across the city. This finding was confirmed by our evaluators who explained that after two focus groups, duplicative answers are a common result. Although we explained this in our RFP, we were still criticized for not representing communities. Please comment.

Answer: The 21st Century Program is a community-based effort to provide after-school activities and resources to support disadvantaged youths. As such, all applicants must provide evidence that their proposed programs are representative of and involve collaborative partners from each of the communities to be served. For applicants proposing to serve a great many communities and schools, this means that a needs assessment must be conducted and results provided for each community to be served. This year's application features two variations on the same rubric (one for applicants whose core grant totals less than \$2 million and another for applicants whose core grant totals \$2 million or more). To ensure that applicants proposing programs to serve a very large number of communities or schools (i.e., proposing greater than or equal to \$2 million in core grant funding) have ample space to describe each of those communities, an additional ten pages is allotted for the core grant narrative of those using the "large application" rubric.

2. **Question:** If we conducted a parent needs assessment last school year, can we use results from that or must we do a new one?

Answer: Any needs assessment should reflect the current state of your local community.

Charging of Fees

1. **Question:** What exactly does “discouraging fees” mean?

Answer: The intent of the 21st CCLC Program is to establish programs that offer academic assistance and enrichment to students in need of such services. Although it is not contrary to law to charge fees for participation in programs, CDE discourages charging such fees if it excludes students in need from attending the program and taking advantage of the 21st CCLC Program services.

2. **Question:** Regarding the charging of fees: May we offer "scholarships" for poverty-level students?

Answer: Section G-14 of the United States Department of Education’s “21st CCLC Program Non-Regulatory Guidance” states that services must be equally accessible to all students targeted for services regardless of their ability to pay. Programs that propose to charge fees may not prohibit any family from participating due to its financial situation. Programs that propose to charge fees must offer a sliding scale of fees and scholarships for those who cannot afford to participate, and any income collected from fees must be used to fund program activities specified in the grant application.

3. **Question:** Why is it not a good idea to make a small fee a part of sustaining the program? Doesn't it make sense that when the parents are interested, they will take a higher interest in the program?

Answer: The charging of fees is a locally determined policy. If the charging of fees is seen as necessary and legitimate, then the local collaborative’s decision is allowed.

Child Care Licensing

1. **Question:** What does "may" refer to when referencing a child care license? Does this refer to a program that is only after school?

Answer: Our office does not address the issue of child care licensing. Because 21st CCLC programs may be located at an off-school site venue, it is important to make sure that your program will be in compliance with any state laws. Please refer to the Child Care Licensing Division of the California Department of Social Services at <http://www.cclcd.ca.gov/> for more information.

Sustainability Plan

1. **Question:** May state after-school funding be included as part of our sustainability plan?

Answer: A sustainability plan should reflect the strength and commitments of all collaborative partners. One strategy to work toward ensuring the sustainability of a program might be applying for additional grant funds.

2. **Question:** I don't think I can get partners to make commitments regarding the end of the grant. I don't know businesses that are planning five years out. They will all be willing to try, but I doubt any firm commitments will be forthcoming. How will a lack of commitment count against the proposal?

Answer: The inclusion of a sustainability plan within the program narrative is intended to have collaboratives pay attention to the reality that this funding is not a never-ending source of funding for their program. Collaboratives should, to the extent possible, plan for their program's future. Collaborative partners should identify a plan to secure funding to ensure their program's operation beyond the grant cycle. A sustainability plan is not intended to be a contract with partners. At the very least, collaborative partners should commit to do everything possible to ensure the continuance of the program after funding ends.

Miscellaneous

1. **Question:** Would an arts education program that supports academic enrichment but does not directly address the core subject areas be applicable to the 21st CCLC Program?

Answer: Grant proposals are developed by local school-community partnerships to address the academic and enrichment needs of the students and community they propose to serve. If a grantee identifies arts education as a student/community need, then an appropriate program design would address that need. The RFA specifically addresses academic core content areas of reading/language arts and mathematics. However, grantees may define what elements will be included in the program's enrichment activities that support these core content areas (see page 8 of the RFA).